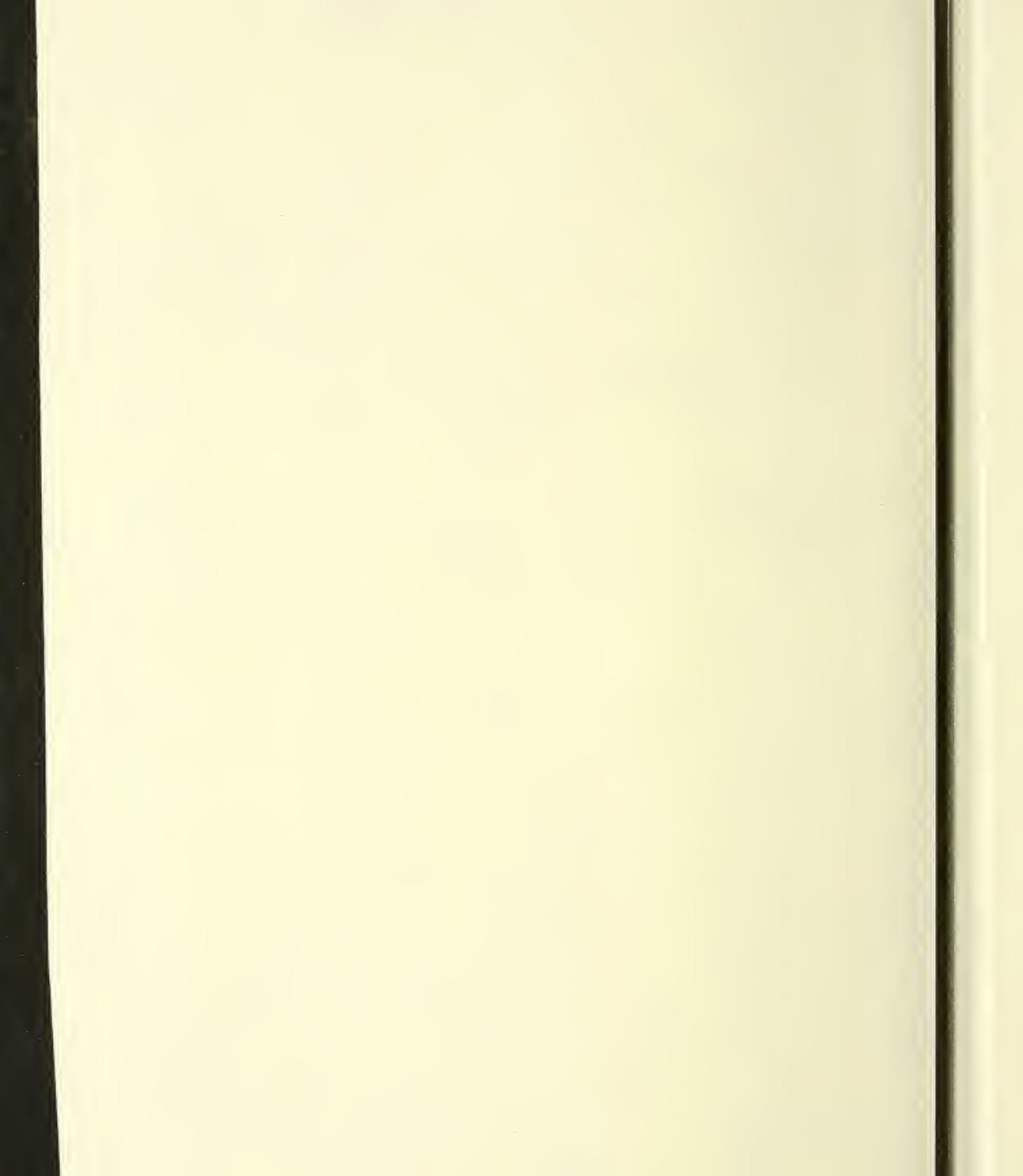


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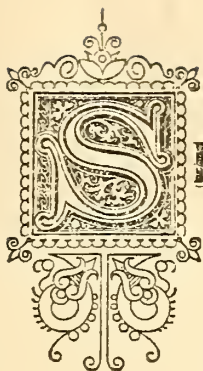


Title



— M. J. SAVAGE —



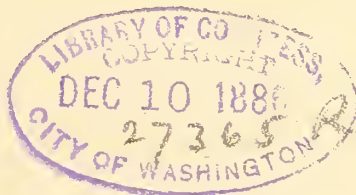


ELECTIONS

FROM

not a fiction
M. J. SAVAGE.

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STRAY ARROWS.



THE year lies before you, — an unbroken block of possible good or ill. The tools are in your hand. Whether you will or no, you must break its unused surface, and give it some shape that shall stand as showing what you are and what you can do.



THE grandest reformation of all the ages will begin on that day — if it ever comes — when each man stops fretting over the faults of his neighbors, and begins the quiet performance of his own daily duty.

YOU are on a journey ; and the object of that journey is the discovery of the divine secret of life : to find your manhood and your womanhood ; to enjoy, to grow, to serve ; to become the noblest possible, and to experience the satisfaction which is the natural fragrance given out by the perfect outflowing of that in you which is best. As you pursue this journey let neither work nor play, nor any roadside attractions, nor incidents of the way, distract your attention from the end, which is the ideal life itself, the eternal goal.

THIS old but ever new world of ours, the earth and the sky, is one grand parchment, that, though we become so dull as to think it commonplace, is yet written all over, by God's own hand, with tales of wonder and beauty. If, then, the commonest things do not speak to us, it is for lack, not of God's wisdom, but our own.

LET us remember that there is no great hardship, or ought not to be, about the fact that the most of us are ordinary one-talent people. The world of men, like the world of nature, is made up of inequalities, valley, intervale, plateau, mountain-peak; and which of all these things, think you, has the advantage? . . . I believe that, in the eyes of our Father in Heaven, as he looks down on the children of men, the distinctions of high and low, of great and small, of rich and poor, are blotted out; and what he cares for is not the difference between the five talents, and the two, and the one, but only the faithfulness with which we use the one talent or the five.

WE need the emotion of joy in our own faces, in order that its reflected light may brighten other lives. A sunny, joyous, contented man is himself a public benefit.

HE who, at the end of his course on earth, can look back over a life in which thought, and love, and duty, justice, kindliness, and help, appreciation of beauty and good, have been supreme, — such a man can but know that his life has been a success. While he whose dominant principles have been selfish and sordid and earthly, whose eyes and ears have been closed to the lovely forms and the low, sweet voices of the beautiful, the true, and the good, though he come to his end loaded down with possessions and decorations, is yet written all over with failure.

NO one man can get all the prizes of life ; but, if he will, he may get the highest, — God, character, the inner peace, the life that is a “joy forever.” Manhood and noble happiness are fruits that grow within the reach of every hand that wills to pluck them.

. . . BY this word "home," I wish you to note that I mean a deeper, more significant thing than merely that place where a man eats his dinner and goes to sleep at night. The real home is where the heart comes to anchor, rises and falls gently with the tide, not pulling at its cables as if anxious to break away. The real home of the mind is such a theory of things as satisfies the intellect, and brings mental peace. The real home of the soul is such a religious conception of the world as makes one feel that he has found shelter under the paternal wings of a mighty and eternal rest.

SOME take the web-cloth of life and cut out the garments of indulgence with the shears of selfishness; and the corners and remnants not needed for mending can go to clothe the nakedness of the world's great needs.

THOSE who are never tempted, and are always sweet and pure, are like beautiful and costly vases that are kept with the utmost care, and are only used as ornaments, or for holding rare and fragrant flowers. Let them rejoice in this; they are beautiful and fortunate. But let them not be too hard on the common pitchers, made of coarser earth and subjected to the rough usage of daily wear and tear. If these latter get sometimes soiled and broken, the vase in the parlor, that runs no risks, is hardly entitled to take on any airs of personal superiority.

WHATEVER else is doubtful, there is no doubt about the Golden Rule. What the world means by practical Christianity is practical righteousness; and by that law every intelligent man is bound.

EVERY thought, every word, every deed,
writes a sentence of good or evil on your
character; and that which "is written is written."
No tears, or prayers, or sacraments can ever undo
a fact. That which is past is past forever. Om-
nipotence itself cannot make it not to have been;
you may, indeed, recover yourself, outgrow the
evil, and rise in spite of the past; but the evil
record and the fact of the injury it has done to
others can never be effaced.

NO university ever yet furnished a man either
brains or character. Given the man to
start with, the college may help him, or—it
must also be said—may injure him. It also de-
pends on how it is used. Whatever a man may
have studied or not studied, he is the best edu-
cated man who is the best fitted for his life-work.

WHEN a man lives simply for play, for enjoyment, for indulgence, he becomes a parasite, a thief. He wastes the substance of the world which the labor of others has accumulated, and produces nothing to repair that waste. There are, unfortunately, no prisons for those who only use the world's goods, and create nothing to take their place; and yet they as truly steal as do those who are behind the bars.

WHEN we are miserable it is almost always because, like a spoiled child, we sit in the midst of plenty, and cry for something just then beyond our reach.

FIND or make a purpose in life that shall redeem it from its petty selfishness and purely personal aims.

WE can make our little world beautiful, sweet, musical, pleasant, or the opposite, very much as we please; and we do make it what we are. If it seems to us a pretty bad world, the question arises whether our mental and moral eyes do not need the services of a physician; and whether, instead of spitting out our contempt upon our neighbors and friends, we do not need to seek some fountain of moral and mental cleanliness and health.

WHATEVER helps on your higher manhood and womanhood, whatever only rests, refreshes, beautifies it, if not allowed to interfere with more important things or take away from that which you owe to others, — these are lovely and healthful growths. But any best thing may become a weed if misapplied or abused.

THERE is no music in all the world, written or unwritten, silent or sung, that can, for one moment, match the happy, spontaneous laughter of a child. There is no beauty in all the world, in statue or canvas or human imagination, that is more perfect than that which looks at us out of child faces in our homes and in the streets. There is nothing the world has yet attained higher, finer, sweeter, than the little child that God has set in the midst of every one of our homes.

EVERY man, woman, and child on earth have good in their characters, if we will only seek for it, and if we will only find the proper stand-point of appreciation.

HTHE best helps the world who helps men to be manly, to rise up into their better selves.

IF any of you have not all you want, or think you have been ill-used at the hands of life, suppose you go to work and try to reckon up just how much you have deserved, and on what precisely you would base your claims for more. All the good you have is an outright gift; and what you lack or wish does not represent any debt to you that any one has unjustly refused to pay.

IT is a slander on God's fair world to say that there is always a serpent lurking in every bower of bliss. There need be no serpent in the way of healthful pleasure unless we put him there.

BETTER be ever so small a reality on your own account than ever so large a shadow of a bigger reality.

WE need to remember that we were once children; to be patient not only, but to be sympathetic; to enter into the feelings, the little hopes and aspirations, the little disappointments of childhood. I believe that if a young man can go out into the world remembering that father and mother were always patient, always considerate, always kindly, always loving; remembering that, whenever they punished, they did it not in anger, as though they enjoyed it, but sadly and with pain, suffering even more than did the child,—if such a young man can go out into the world remembering that father and mother did everything possible for the happiness and welfare of his boyhood; if he can associate all the sweetness and best things of childhood with his home,—then he has received the grandest gift that father and mother can possibly confer upon him.

HOLD your creed as representing that which you know, or have reason to believe, is true. Keep it ever subject to revision. Accept whatever comes with the credentials of truth. But, above all, remember that this truth, after you have attained it, is only the first step. . . . Religion is not something simply to have, it is something to be done. Find out the truth, then, concerning your inner life, concerning the relation in which you ought to stand to your fellow-men, concerning the relation in which you ought to stand toward the infinite Power that compasses us around; and then, when you have found out the truth, incarnate it. Do it. Work it into institutions and deeds. Suppose you know the truth concerning the perfect kingdom of God on earth, of what avail is that? Go on, and build that kingdom.

LET us have a little of heaven here, if we can, and not put it all beyond the grave.

IF we measure things by their influence on human welfare, we must put worry very near the front rank of evils ; for perhaps there is nothing in American life that is a greater destroyer of happiness. . . . Our wives are sweet enough, our husbands kind enough, our children good and promising enough, to make us happy, if only we will try to help. There are bitter ingredients now and then in the cup of life ; but it, to me, is so wondrous, so mysterious, so delicious a draught, that, however it ends, I thank God for it every day. Nobody but ourselves can poison it ; and we shall find in it enough that is sweet and sparkling, if only with our own hands we do not squeeze into it the bitter wormwood of gratuitous worry.

TO know God's laws and to obey them, to help others to do the same, this must always be the secret of life and the salvation of the world.

GOING TO SLEEP.



AFTER the day's long playing,
Tired as tired can be,
My baby girl comes saying,
"Papa, will 'ou rock me?"

The busy works of day-time
Allure her now no more;
The books and toys of play-time
Are scattered round the floor.

Off now with shoe and stocking,
Off with the crumpled dress;
She's ready now for rocking,
For crooning and caress.

And slowly sinking, sinking,
The night comes down the skies;
While drooping, opening, winking,
Sleep settles on her eyes.

She does not fear the sleeping :
 Out o'er the sea of dark,
Close held in papa's keeping,
 She drifts in her frail bark.

No matter for the morrow, —
 Enough that papa knows ;
With smile undimmed by sorrow,
 Out in the dark she goes.

So should it be with dying :
 Drop earthly cares and fears ;
In Father's arms you're lying ;
 Look up with smiles, not tears.

You know not of the waking ?
 Be not with fear beguiled ;
For, when the morning's breaking,
 He'll not forget His child.

WHERE IS GOD?



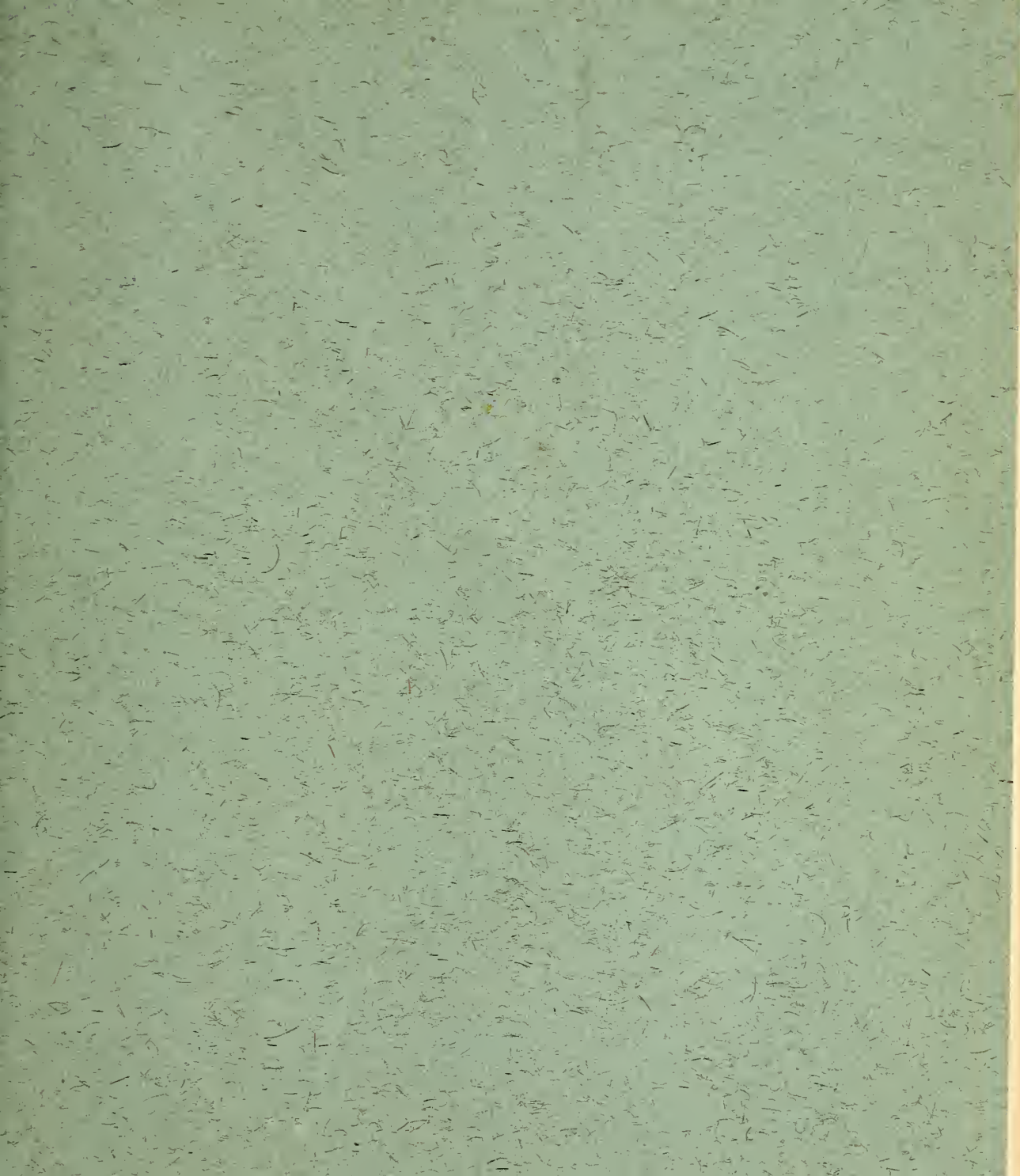
“OH, where is the sea?” the fishes cried,
As they swam the crystal clearness through.
“We’ve heard from of old of the ocean’s tide,
And we long to look on the waters blue.
The wise ones speak of the infinite sea :
Oh, who can tell us if such there be?”

The lark flew up in the morning bright,
And sung and balanced on sunny wings ;
And this was its song : “I see the light,
I look o’er a world of beautiful things ;
But, flying and singing everywhere,
In vain I have searched to find the air.”

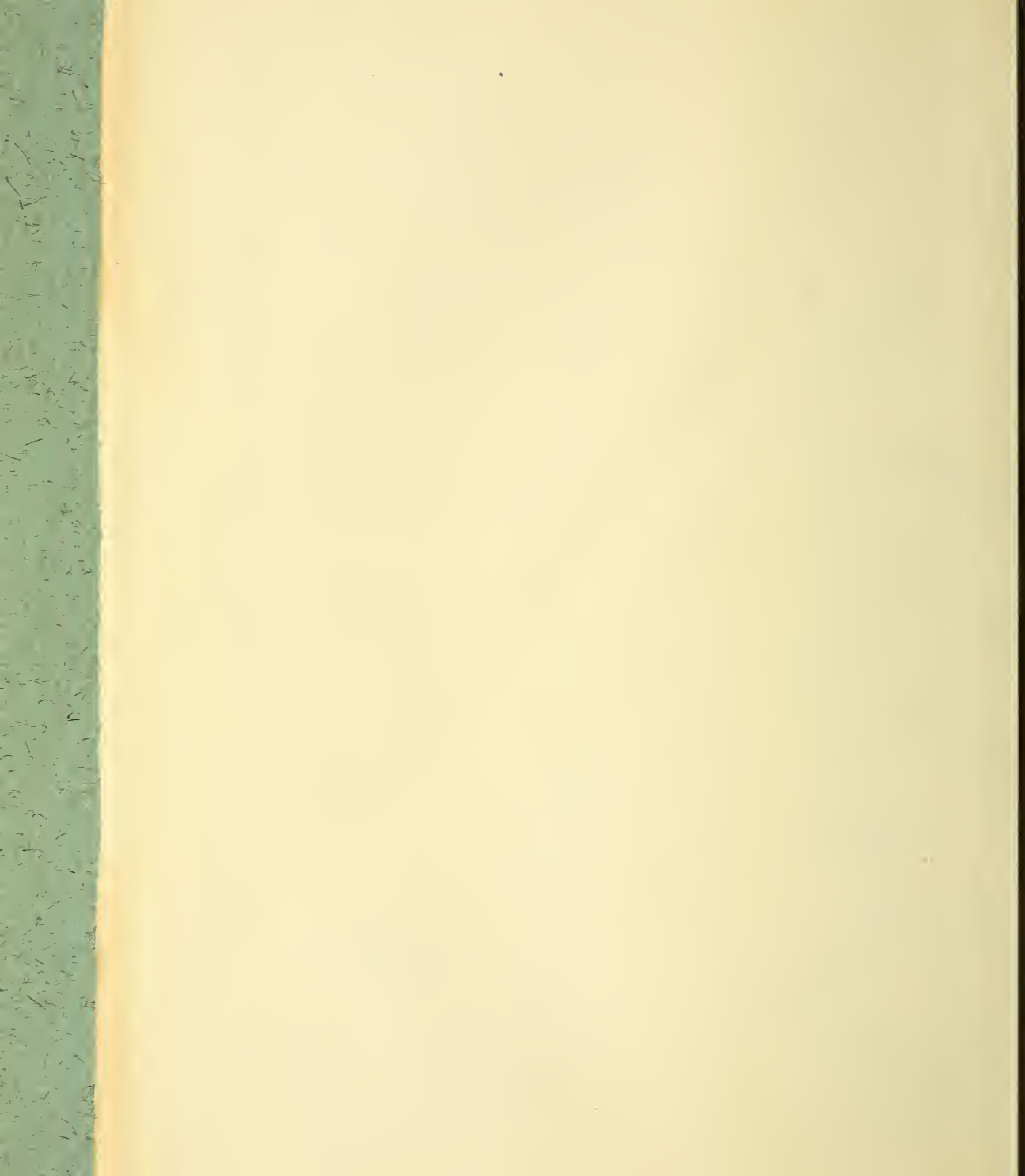
NONE LIVETH TO HIMSELF.

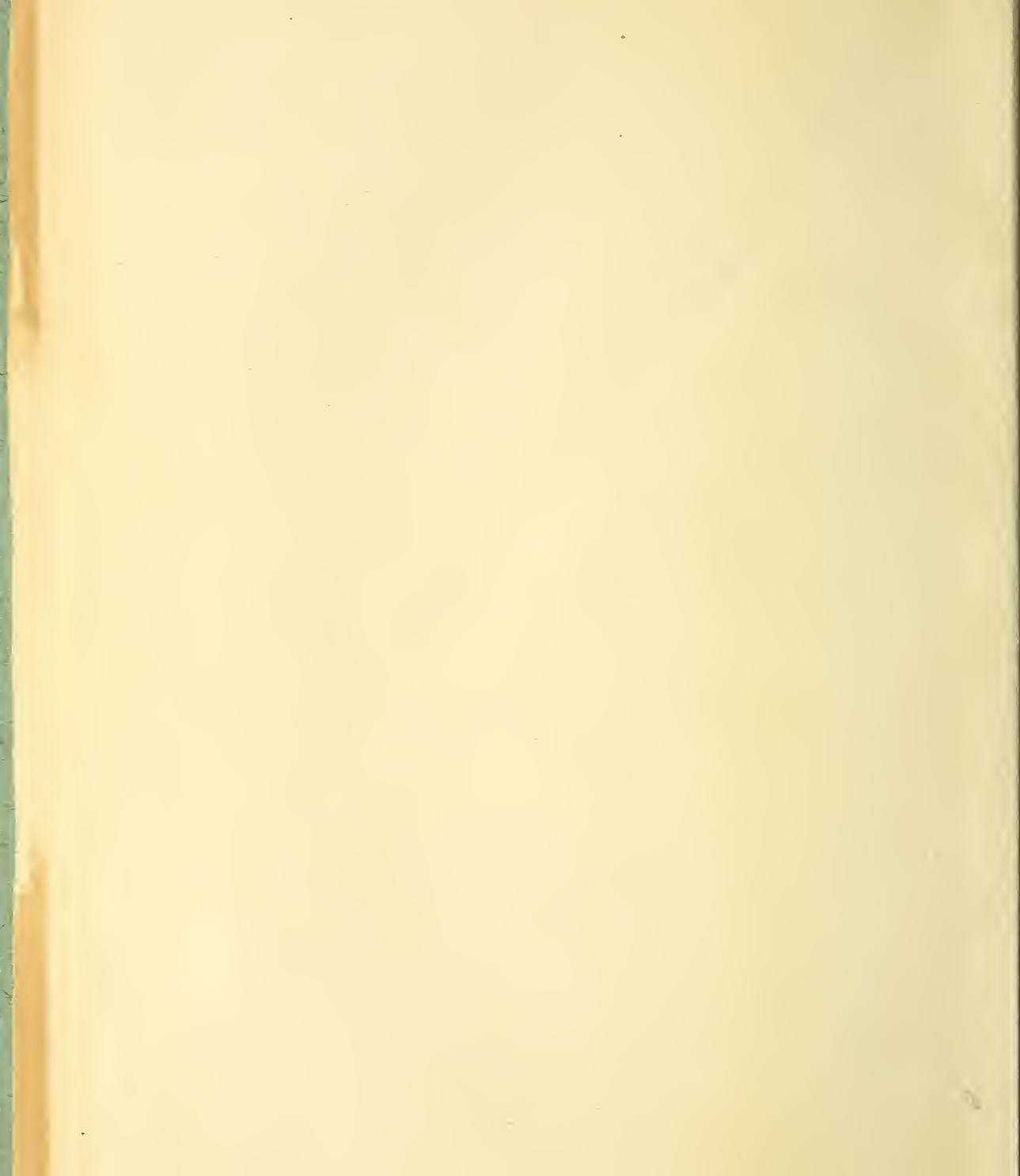
SAY not, "It matters not to me :
My brother's weal is *his* behoof!"
For, in this wondrous human web,
If your life's warp, his life is woof.
Woven all together are the threads,
And you and he are in one loom:
For good or ill, for glad or sad,
Your lives must share one common doom.

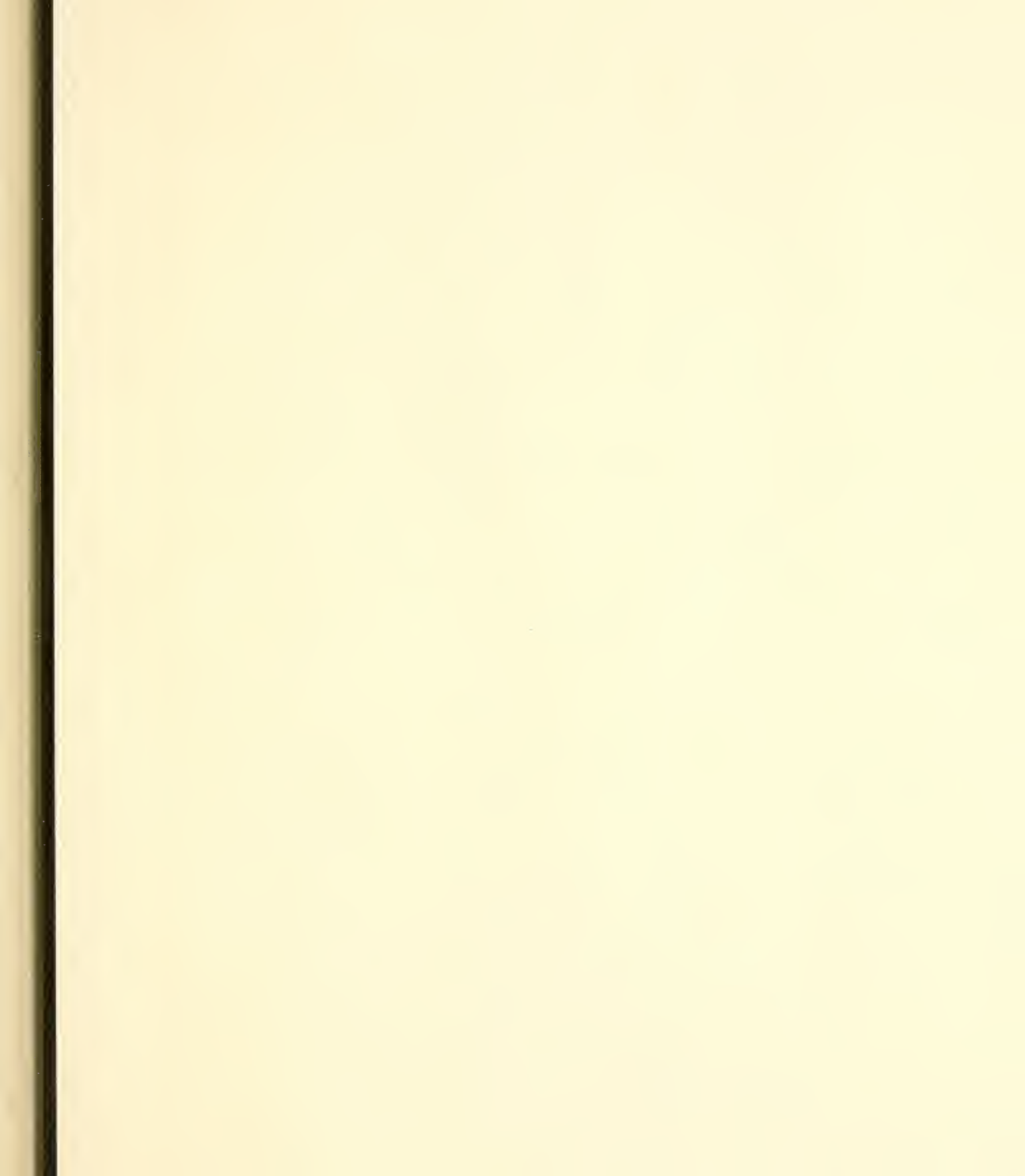
Then let the daily shuttle glide,
Wound full with threads of kindly care,
That life's increasing length may be
Not only strongly wrought, but fair,
So, from the stuff of each new day,
The loving hand of Time shall make
Garments of joy and peace for all;
And human hearts shall cease to ache.

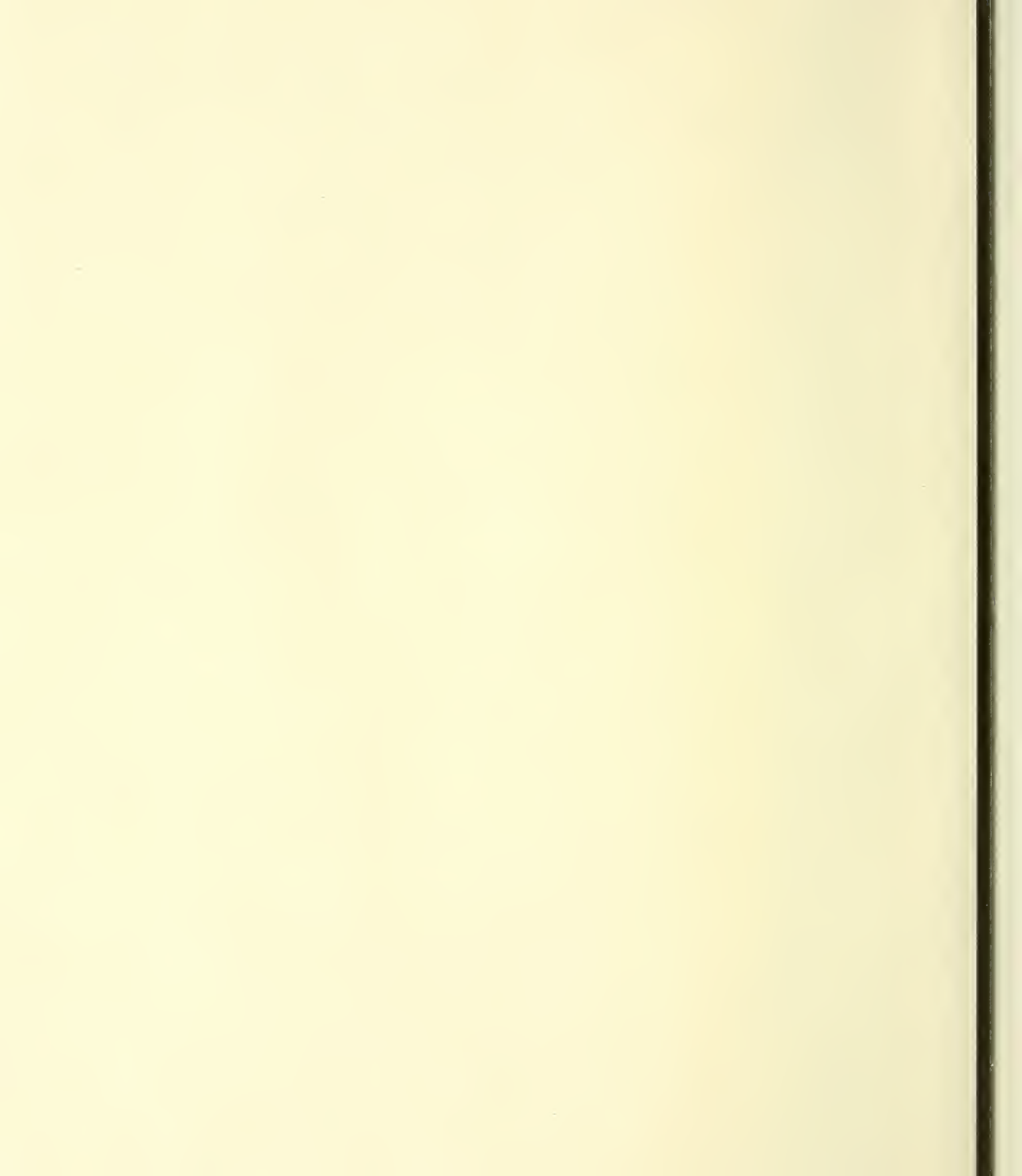


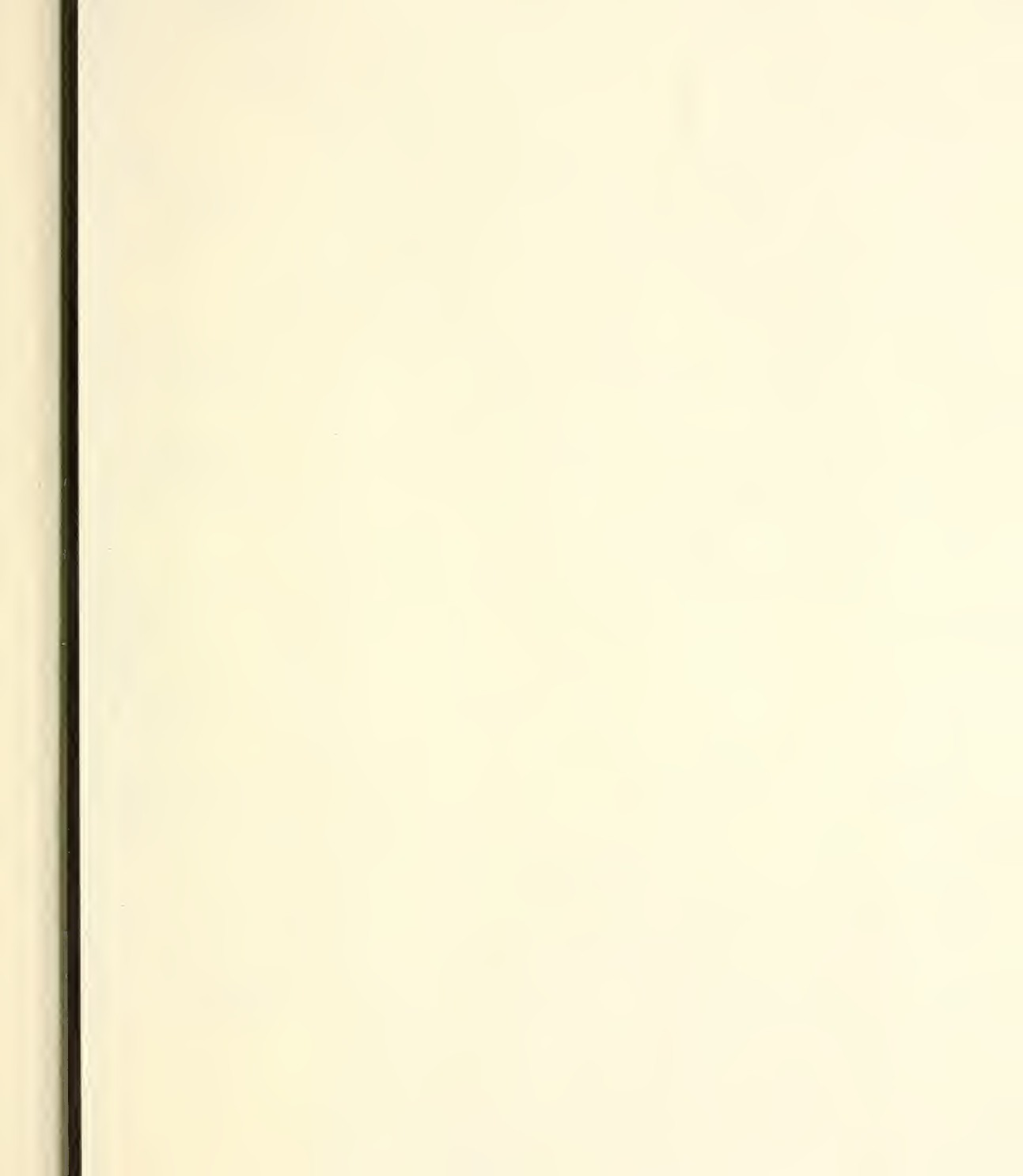


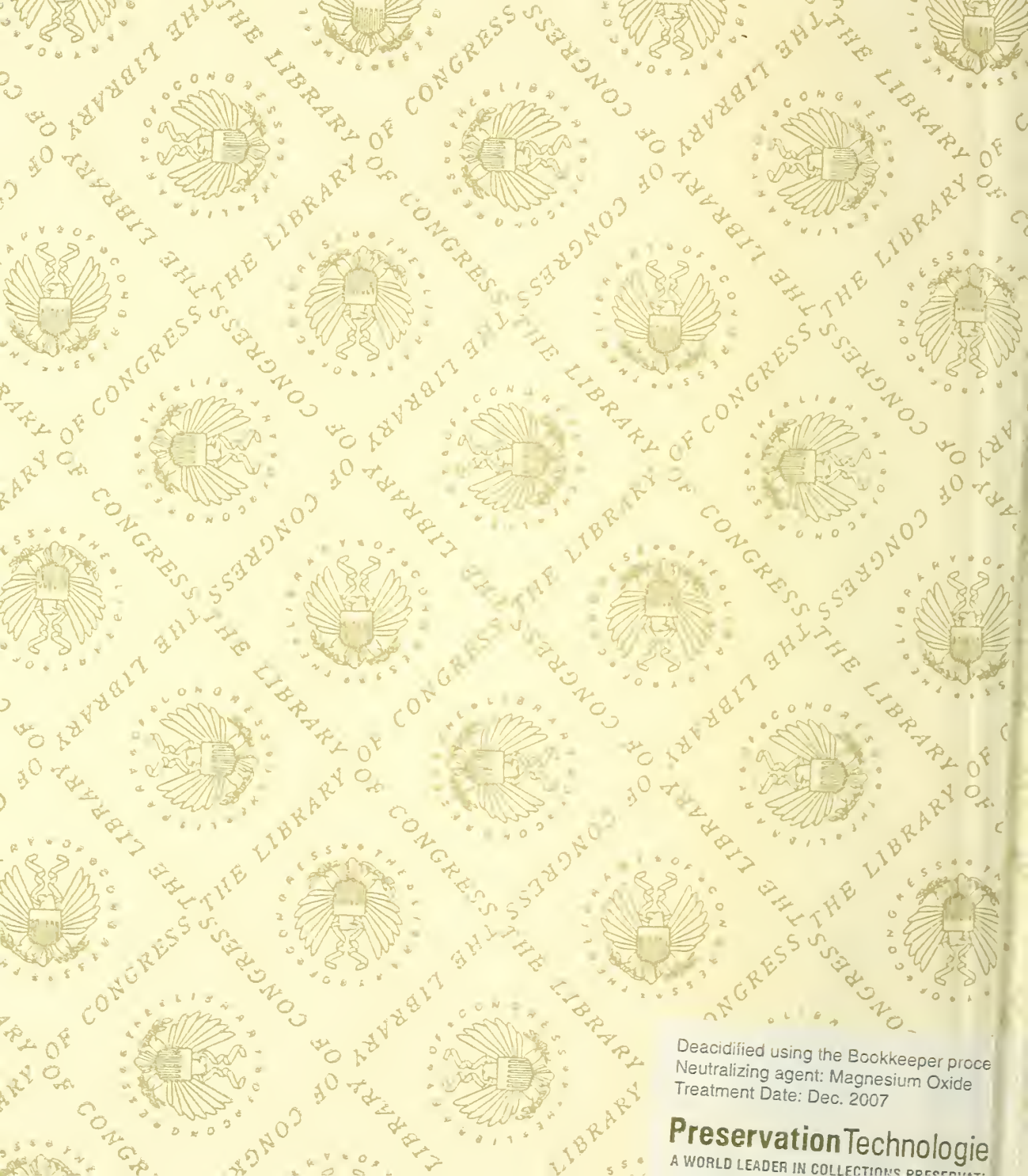












Deacidified using the Bookkeeper process
Neutralizing agent: Magnesium Oxide
Treatment Date: Dec. 2007

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